

Society of Incentive and Travel Executives

Aruba Hosts SITE 2009 International Conference



ORANJESTAD - Aruba is thrilled to host the Society of Incentive Travel Executives (SITE) 2009 International Conference that started last evening with a press conference.

This event will bring together the top minds in incentive travel, a multi-billion dollar global industry, to one of the Caribbean's most celebrated destinations.

Aruba promises to be the "host with the most" as it welcomes hundreds of delegates from around the world for three days of educational sessions, vendor showcases, roundtables, networking events, gala dinners and much more.

The 2009 International Conference is being held at the two official host hotels, The Westin Aruba Resort and the Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa.

Securing this significant conference comes at a perfect



time for the destination as Aruba is enjoying increased interest from around the globe. Not only has the island recently undergone over \$350 million in upgrades, expansions and renovations across all aspects of the tourism sector, but arrivals from the U.S. are also up.

SITE's membership is rich with innovators who greatly influence not only the evolution of the incentive industry, but also the business outcomes of

client organizations. The SITE International Conference is a superlative forum where professionals from around the world gather to share insights that help them achieve

professional goals, surpass client expectations, and have a meaningful and positive impact on economies of destination cities around the world.

Continued on Next Page



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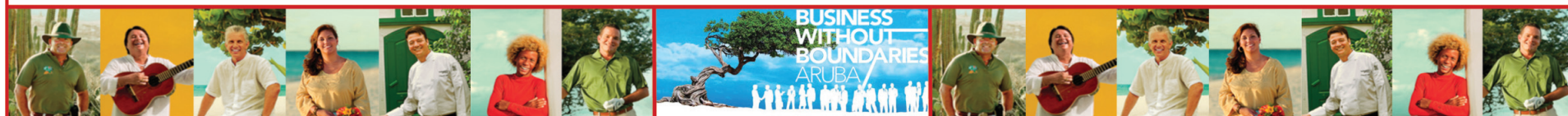
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WELCOME SITE Friends



SITE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2009 OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 2



The Perfect combination of sounds and flavors

Steel Drums and Saxophone tag team at Paseo Herencia



PASEO HERENCIA - Lee Connor, who composes and arranges all of his own music, dishes up the sounds of calypso using synthesizers and steel drums, will play this evening at Moby Dick's Seafood Restaurant in the Paseo Herencia Mall. This will be a great and unique dinner experience for all as the under-water-world atmosphere combined with the Caribbean flavors of the

restaurant and sounds of Lee Connor's pans will afford an unforgettable evening. You definitely have to go to Moby Dick's Seafood Restaurant to enjoy an evening like this.

Then on Sunday, Aruba's most famous Sax Man Delbert Bernabela will be live on the mall square in front of Moby Dick's for all patrons to enjoy. His sounds are terrific and everyone



loves to listen to his Jazz music with a Caribbean flair. The menu is loaded with fabulous sensations from the sea as well as tender tastes from the land. Besides having the most incredible cocktails, Moby Dick's is the only place on the island to savor the legendary Bloody Oyster - the ultimate delicacy only known by deep sea connoisseurs who take pleasure in its delight

on Sunday. If you can't wait for Sunday for this deep sea concoction of Fresh Oysters, Cooked Shrimp, Cold Vodka, Tomato Juice, Tabasco, Lime Juice, Black Pepper and Celery come today.

See you there tonight for the perfect combination of Caribbean sounds paired with island flavors. The kitchen is open from 12 noon to 10:30 PM. □

Aruba Hosts SITE 2009 International Conference

Continued from Front Page
"We were thrilled to hear of SITE's decision to make Aruba its host location for the 2009 International Conference," said Minister of Tourism and Transportation, Edison Briesen. "The incentive travel industry is an important one for our island and we are looking forward to showcasing the many things that sets Aruba apart from the rest of the Caribbean region throughout the conference.

We are confident that SITE's commitment to bringing together the most influential minds in this field, coupled with Aruba's dedication to delivering an unmatched travel experience to all our guests, is a recipe for success." These principals of community, leadership and growth guide SITE's vision - as well as its commitment to selecting distinct locales for its own events. Aruba, situated in the southern Caribbean,



is a tropical paradise that enjoys year-round near perfect weather, less than 20 inches of rainfall annually, extraordinary hotels and resorts, over 200 incredible international restaurants, and an extremely rich heritage. Arubans, renowned for their warmth and hospitality and known as the friendliest in the Caribbean region, proudly showcase the island's cultural

and environmental diversity, and are equally devoted to respecting and preserving the island's pristine marine and terrestrial ecosystems. "Because Aruba is, without question, one of the top incentive travel destinations in the Caribbean, it is fitting that SITE, the foremost professional association devoted to the incentive travel market, would choose our

island as the host for its 2009 International Conference," said Myrna Jansen-Feliciano, managing director for the Aruba Tourism Authority. "The decision makers in the incentive travel industry will experience a successful event as a result of our strong public/private partnership that makes planning a meeting so much easier and Aruba's well-known hospitality." □



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For this Christmas Season

Coldwell Banker launches Toys for Tots Campaign



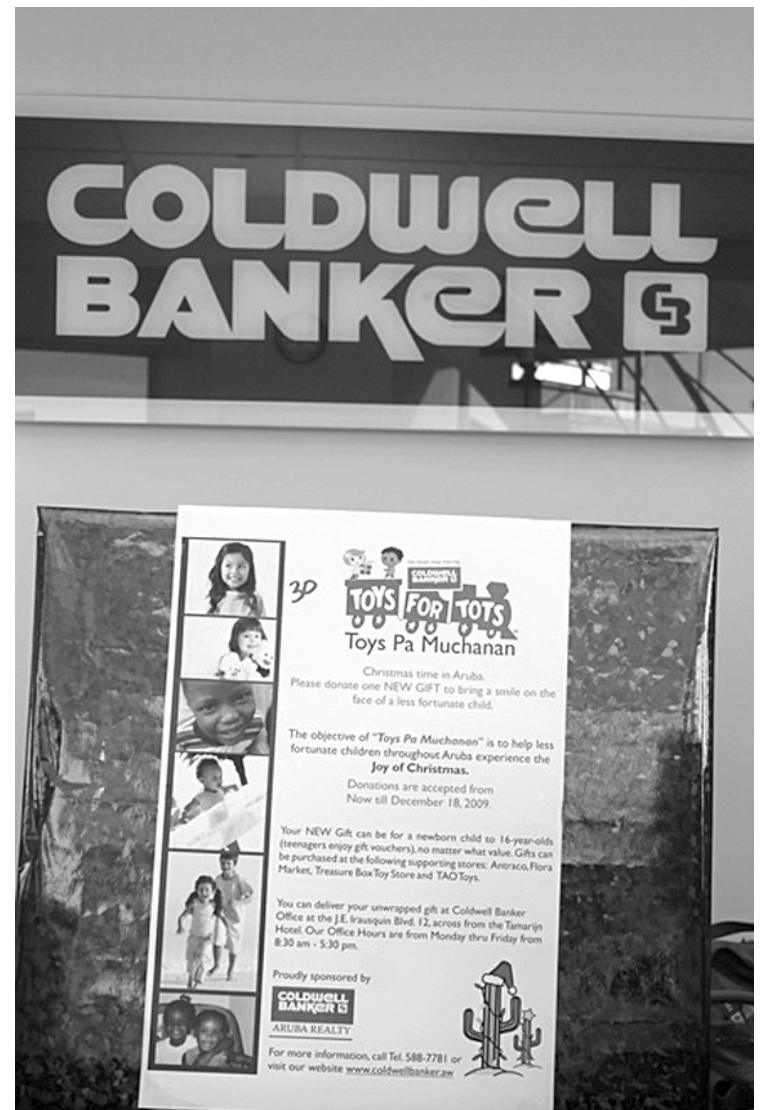
ORANJESTAD - Recently Coldwell Bankers Aruba Realty launched its Toys for Tots campaign for this Christmas season.

The goal of this campaign is to collect toys and give them to the children of families who can't afford to do this and in that way bring a little happiness their heart.

If you want to donate toys or cash (is also possible), you can do this before December 18th, 2009 at Coldwell Banker Aruba Realty, in front of the Tamarijn Hotel from 8.30 am to 5.30 pm.

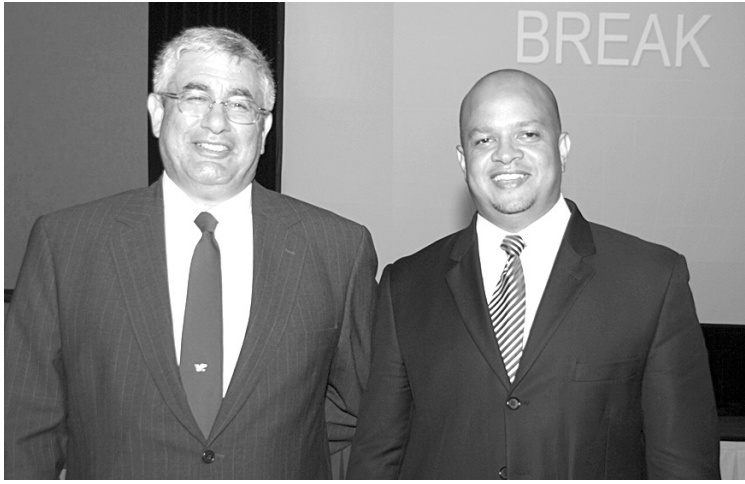
You can also do this at Flora market, Antraco, TAO Toys and Treadure Box.

You too can help put a smile on a child's face this Christmas season by calling 5887781. ☐



At the Radisson Resort

Important travelers' advisories from The Ackerman Group



PALMBEACH - The ballroom of the Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa was the venue for an eye-opening afternoon hosted by Aaron Antersijn, Managing Director of Security Solutions Consultancy of Aruba. Aaron solicited famed personal security specialist, Mike Ackerman, author of the book, "Counterterrorism Strategies for Corporations: The Ackerman Principles," to conduct a Personal Awareness Security Seminar in Aruba, which was conducted by retired Colonel Francisco J. Pedrozo on Tuesday afternoon.

The Ackerman group specializes in hostage negotiations, in particular handling kidnapping victims, and the payment of ransoms, a thriving industry in Latin America and Mexico, which Mr. Pedrozo described as the "kidnapping capital of the world." Venezuela is second, but Colombia, which used to be of great concern, is now not even the top ten. Since the best cure for this crime is prevention, advice on how to avoid being kidnapped, or to prevent similar crimes such as identity and information theft and extortion by threat are the security company's stock and trade. "I am a thirty-year army veteran and former green beret," explained Frank, "Mike Ackerman was with the CIA, and all our operatives have similar qualifications."

The beginning of his presentation examined issues that travelers to Aruba should consider, though Mr. Pedrozo admitted they are not usually the concern of The Ackerman Group. "There is no country in the world without crime of some sort," he reminded the audience. "Those visiting

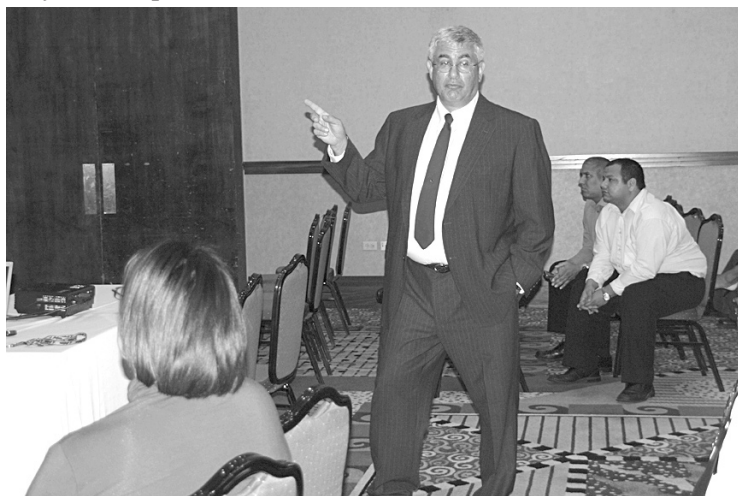
Aruba need not be concerned with kidnapping or other such personal violence, but there are always members of a society which prefer to make their living by victimizing others. They will see tourists as a perfect target for stealing a bag or picking a pocket. Cars in Aruba have license plates that allow someone looking to steal to know it is a rental car, so it is highly likely they may find cash, credit cards, digital and video cameras inside, especially when they find it parked by an isolated beach or tourist site. This became a serious problem for Florida some years ago, so they changed that practice. By being smart when vacationing, visitors can easily prevent an incident that will ruin their vacation, no matter how minor."

Mr. Pedrozo, who frequently travels to Mexico for work, makes it a policy to lock up his credit cards and passport, and only carries enough cash for his activity, plus a little extra in case someone does shake him down. "Make sure you have a photocopy of the picture page of your passport, and the one with the entry stamp; this is really all officials require you to carry if you need it. Passports are valuable, they are a target. Do not leave bags or packages in the car where they can be seen, lock them in the trunk," he advises. "Make it a point to find out what is the most commonly stolen car in the country you're visiting, and rent something else. Research your destination, and make it a point to avoid areas known for criminal activity."

Basically, the advice is simple common sense for



anywhere. Aruba, where the crime is light, petty theft is the principle concern. Don't leave a bag with valuables unattended on the beach and take a swim. Buy a waterproof box on a lanyard to keep cash and credit cards handy. Use the in-room safe provided by your resort, even when in the room while you are asleep. For businessmen who have set up their laptop and PDA in their room, Mr. Pedrozo recommends to make sure they are turned off and information is not accessible, "If you do this in Venezuela, I can guarantee you someone will come in and access your information, then use it in any way they can to extort or steal. Same thing with your cell phone; it is a common practice to steal a phone and then call everyone in your phone book, particularly family, and tell them you are in trouble and need money, or they have you and are going to hurt you if they are not paid."

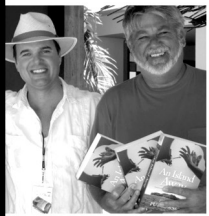


Mr. Pedrozo has children under eighteen, and he is adamant about not allowing them to go to Mexico, where not only the children of local businessmen are repeatedly kidnap victims for ransom, but the taking of tourists in a practice called "Sequestro Express" is a daily occurrence, with victims numbering in the hundreds, weekly. "If you have credit cards and an ATM card with you, then what might have been a quick mugging will now become a lengthy "Sequestro Express," as the perpetrators hold you captive until they have exhausted your credit cards and withdrawn all the cash from your bank account," he explains. "If you don't know your pin numbers, that will make them very angry, and you are in for a world of pain until you can give them that information." Avoiding such situations is, again, a matter of common sense, "but when a tourist get a few drinks in them, which

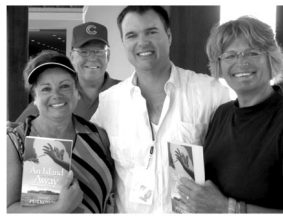
is the norm on a vacation, they get stupid," he observed, "and then they often place themselves in danger. Don't go off with someone you don't know. Don't get into a cab that is not legitimate, and make it a point to find out how to know the difference; these are all simple and sensible things to keep in mind when in a strange location."

For those living on Aruba, the warnings about Latin America are a real consideration as many islanders vacation in these countries, do business in the region, or visit them for medical treatment. "Don't be high-profile," warns Frank, "leave the jewelry in the lock box, don't rent a luxury car, don't flash your money, or change for local currency in the public area of the airport, where people are watching for that sort of thing. It is likely you won't get very far without being robbed."

For more information about travel and business security, particularly for corporations, visit www.ackermangroup.com, which features online courses and twice daily updated advisories for subscribers. Tuesday's presentation offered a wealth of subjects, from travel and corporate security to protecting the home, which can be explored more in depth at The Ackerman Group website or also by contacting Security Solutions Consultancy. □



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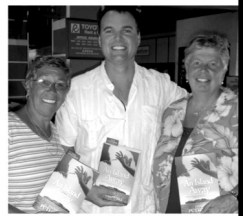
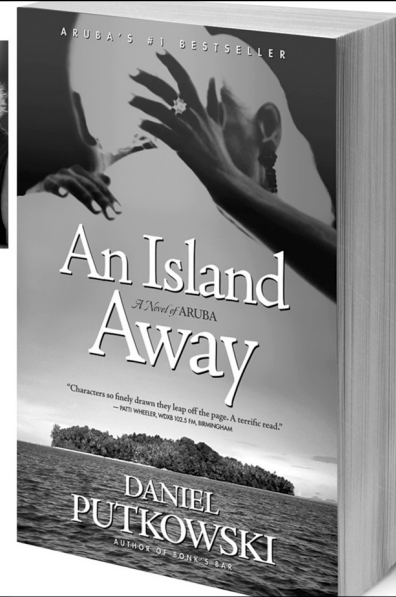
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Spiders converge...

Halloween cake at Taste of Belgium's Chocolaterie



ORANJESTAD-Scaryspiders have converged at Taste of Belgium's Chocolaterie: their webs are proof of their nightly presence at the elegant store in the Renaissance Mall. Halloween is the time of spiders and their webs, and that is why the Chocolaterie is



offering a special Halloween cake: dark, dark, sumptuous chocolate decorated with an orange web.

Not to be missed!

The Chocolaterie downtown is a haven for those with

a sweet tooth, fairies and banshees these days. Indulge and enjoy...☐

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*** Human Hints Daily ***

Its Only A Movie

Long-time Human Hints readers know that these pages are peppered with the phrase, "three dimensional illusion". When a word or phrase is repeated, we can become numb to it and forget the power behind the symbol of words.

Three dimensional constructs are not real, but only from a certain perspective, and this is where we transform ourselves.

Until now, we have thought of ourselves as a three dimensional body. From our body's point of view, the illusion of Separation is

all too real. When we shift our perspective into Infinite Unity, the illusory nature of three dimensional form becomes clear.

Your Spirit knows that it is not real. Our physical bodies are like actors on a movie screen, and our Spirit is the Director of the movie. We're actors in the movie, but we think the movie is real. Spirit, the Director, knows it's only a movie. When we get in touch with the Director, we can go with the flow of the movie.

Our Spirit knows that it's all

an illusion, so it doesn't care what happens to our three dimensional form, as long as it is consistent with our Life's Purpose. In Unity, your Spirit is not subject to the emotions of duality. Suffering and Joy, Pain and Pleasure do not exist beyond the illusion of Separation. Your Spirit remains completely neutral to your emotions, while it creates the physical experience you signed up for.

The challenge is to act with Unrestrained Passion, while knowing that it's all an illusion. Knowing that its not

real allows us to separate our emotions from the outcome of our pursuits. When we know it's not real, the three dimensional outcome is meaningless. In the three dimensional pursuit, we act with as much passion as we can possibly generate.

Practice seeing three dimensions as an illusion by marveling at the power of the illusion. Think about the extent to which you got lost in the hologram, and realize that you are now seeing beyond the Veil.

Become aware of yourself as your Spirit, directing the movie that your body is acting out. Make yourself the Director of your Life Movie. The Director is your own Spirit, so you're getting in touch with a part of yourself that you've never been aware of in three dimensions. Faith in your Imagination is all you need, to see past the Veil of illusion.

When you become emotionally aware that three dimensions aren't real, you become fearless in the movie. Your deepest personal fears become equal to your most routine chores because neither are real. They are both

illusions and you are eternal. The events in a movie don't actually happen to the actors. Nothing in this illusion can ever effect who you truly are, a Spirit in Unity with the Infinite Consciousness.

Until Tomorrow...

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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PALM BEACH – The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but **Texas de Brazil's** version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, **Texas de Brazil** will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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ECO DMS orchestrating a clean sweep



PALMBEACH—Management and staff members of ECO DMS, a full service destination management company dedicated to the meetings & incentives market, organized its own beach and road clean-up on Saturday, doing a clean sweep of the beachfront from the Marriott Aruba Resort to



Tierra del Sol, covering the public beach and surrounding areas on the boulevard. It was a joint effort of company associates, which view their corporate responsibility as an obligation, and uphold green principles in their every-day practices. ECO DMS continuously supports the efforts of the hotels and the Aruba Hotel

& Tourism Association in keeping Aruba clean and raising awareness regarding the subject of sustainable tourism. The ECO DMS crew reports they were able to collect significant amounts of plastic cups, take-out Styrofoam boxes and cigarette butts, left behind by beachgoers, which seemed to be the biggest culprits. They

are seen here in our pictures, apparently having fun too, as they participate in the clean up readying the island for SITE International Conference 2009, titled Business without Boundaries, unfolding here Thursday to Sunday, at the Westin Aruba Resort and the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa as host hotels. □

The International School of Aruba Celebrates Diversity



ORANJESTAD - On Friday, October 23, the International School of Aruba held its annual International Day. The event was sponsored by the ISA Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). During this celebration, the ISA community came together to recognize the 27 nations represented within the school community. The day started off with a parade of nations. Students and teachers marched out on the school stage, many wearing national dress and proudly waving their countries flag. A

wonderful international food festival provided by the parents followed the flag ceremony. After everyone sampled foods from around the world, students and teachers provided the audience with some wonderful entertainment. A final highlight of the day was the newly appointed Minister of Justice and Education, Mr. Arthur Dowers, sharing some very poignant thoughts about United Nations Day and rights of all people around the world. It was another a great day at ISA. □

At Aqua Grill restaurant

Sunset toast to a happy life together



PALM BEACH - On Tuesday afternoon, Danna and Jeffry held a reception to honor their marriage at the critically-acclaimed Aqua Grill restaurant. The Palm Beach restaurant was the perfect venue for a

chicly casual affair that began with a champagne toast on the

al fresco terrace of the Palm Beach restaurant.

Earlier in the afternoon, the couple exchanged vows at the downtown courthouse. Danna and Jeffry were joined by family and friends, who also enjoyed dinner in the restaurant, with a menu that features fresh fish caught off



the island's coast, as well as fresh catches flown in daily, live Maine lobster, and the island's largest raw bar. Aqua Grill has a staff experienced in planning

events large and small, and can tailor menus, coordinate entertainment, flowers, and all those little extras to make your event unique and special. □

Prizes and surprises on Belgian Fright Night



PASEO HERENCIA - Don't be scared on Friday, October

30 and Saturday, October 31 when the true Halloween spirit takes hold of Taste of Belgium's Bistro at the Paseo Herencia Mall. Called 'Belgian Fright Night', the two evenings are fun-filled, with a DJ, a Happy Hour, Belgian Beer specials, reduced cocktail prices and a Halloween-themed menu.

The Bistro's popular 3-course Early Bird Special is of course available, but there are also enticing daily specials and Halloween specials. What these are, you will have to find out for yourself. The



DJ is playing from 7 to 11 pm; the Happy Hour is from 7 to 9. Expect prizes and surprises; screaming is optional! □



At the University of Aruba in Oranjestad

Aruba Orchid Society hosts successful expo



ORANJESTAD - Recently the Aruba orchid Society had an expo of orchids at the University of Aruba in Oranjestad.

The expo was very beautiful and colorful and the flora lovers could appreciate the cariety of orchids that were in bloom.

Also during the expo the visitors had the opportunity to expand their knowledge regarding orchids. Congratulations to the Aruba Orchid Society.□



Island Council rejects appeal for a new lab

~ DP members walk out during voting ~

PHILIPSBURG--By a five to zero vote in the Island Council on Tuesday, the council rejected the appeal by Health Care Laboratory St. Maarten (HCLS) to establish its own lab facility in St. Maarten. The individual in the forefront of HCLS is a young local entrepreneur who studied abroad to become a Microbiologist Analyst. The individual filed for a business licence when the Democratic Party was in power, but the licence was denied and an appeal followed shortly thereafter.

Based on the law the practitioner must have a working arrangement with St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) to be able to have a private practice.

In the case of HCLS Leader of Government Commissioner William Marlin of the National Alliance (NA) said the current government was of the opinion that adding a new lab was not in the interest of the cost of public health.

Democratic Party leader Island Councilwoman Sarah Wescot-Williams referred to an advice to grant the permit, which was not attached in the documents submitted to the Island Council for it to make a decision on whether the permit should be issued.

For this reason the DP members did not vote on accepting or rejecting the appeal and walked out of Dr. A.C. Wathey Legislative Hall during the voting.

Marlin and Health Department Director Jorien Wuite contended that the advice formulated by an outside committee was merely an internal memo between the NA faction and the Directorate of Health Affairs, a memo Marlin said the DP members had seen when they were in power.

Further, he said it was not customary that the Executive Council and Island Council share internal memos.

While Democratic Party Island Councilman Roy Marlin expressed the view that young local entrepreneurs should have flexibility in their home country, William Marlin suggested that any individual with an administrative degree

could return home and open a lab, hiring the necessary staff to run the establishment. Instead, he said, the young practitioner should be able to contribute to the existing lab as the opportunity is there.

Roy Marlin said this was the second debate over permitting a licence for a young local practitioner, the previous case being over the license for

gynaecologist Dr. Friday. He asked the NA faction if it was not time to revise the current policy to accommodate the young practitioners.

However, NA Island Councilman George Pantophlet pointed out that the policy had been updated in 2005 and was to have been revised in 2008, something that had never been done.

William Marlin suggested that while the DP could have revised the policy when Dr. Friday had first been denied his licence, but the party instead had been too cut up issuing building licences.

Roy Marlin said that in Dr. Holiday's case the SMMC manager had had his own agenda, which had jeopardised Friday's arrangement. □



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'Seceding not possible without consent of all'

THE HAGUE--Dutch State Secretary for Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten officially informed Saba's Executive Council recently that it was not possible for the island territory to secede unilaterally from the Netherlands Antilles.

She explained in her letter dated October 16, which was sent to the Dutch Parliament's Second Chamber last week Friday, that changing the internal relations in the Netherlands Antilles wasn't possible without the consent of the other parties.

Saba's government had indicated in late August that it wanted to secede from the Antillean constellation because it was fed up with the slow-moving process of dismantling the Netherlands Antilles. It sent a letter to Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende on September 1 in which it objected to the organising of Antillean elections in January 2010.

Bijleveld-Schouten, responding on Balkenende's behalf, said the Netherlands had acknowledged the right of self-determination of the people of the individual islands of the Netherlands Antilles in 1981. At the time, the Netherlands had wanted to have a say in decisions regarding the relations with the islands that chose to remain in the Dutch Kingdom.

As such, the Netherlands became a stakeholder, and a different constitutional relationship within the Kingdom can only be realised if all stakeholders agree, stated Bijleveld-Schouten.

She explained that the new future status of the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba as "public entities" of the Netherlands had the consent of all parties, but that the Kingdom Charter had to be amended first. Legislation to integrate the three islands into the Netherlands had to run its course first to ensure an "orderly" transfer, she added.

Bijleveld-Schouten showed understanding for Saba's situation. She said the desire of Saba's people as expressed in the 2004 referendum had been "serious" and that was why the Netherlands had kept working diligently on the smooth transfer of Saba to public entity status.

"In the meantime, the Netherlands will do everything to improve the well-being of the people," she concluded. □

'The box' owner still waiting for permit

CAY HILL--The owner of the warehouse/apartment building at Vorst Estate is waiting for government to either grant or deny his request for a four-storey complex before moving ahead with construction. The building is popularly known on the island as "the box" and its visible presence on the Cay Hill hillside has generated speculation about its nature for well over a year. The structure currently has three floors, including the already existing warehouse for which the necessary permit was issued in 2007.

The advice for the permit for four floors reportedly was signed by Commissioner Theo Heyliger in 2008 and the Lt. Governor reportedly signed the permit for construction in October 2008. What exactly the delay is

in granting or denying the permit remains unclear, as no government official could be reached to provide clarification on Tuesday. The Daily Herald understands that the owner had received permission to build a commercial property (warehouse) in an area designated as residential only. This permit was granted in 2007 in accordance with his planning permit, which stipulated that only a two-storey building might be constructed in the area. The regular inspections of the building by the relevant departments also took place while construction was ongoing on the third floor, but The Daily Herald understands that while no permit had been granted for the third and fourth floors, at no time was a "building stop" order given to the owner. □

St. Maarten tops in 'satisfaction' rating

~ Ranks second in cruise spending ~

ST. LUCIA--It was good and not-so-good news for St. Maarten as a cruise destination this week. The Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) revealed that while the island ranked number one in passenger satisfaction, it had fallen short in passenger spending.

The results of the 2009 Cruise Passenger and Crew Expenditure Survey were announced during the FCCA annual conference in St. Lucia. St. Maarten is represented by Harbour Affairs Commissioner Theo Heyliger, St. Maarten Harbour Group of Companies CEO Mark Mingo and others. St. Maarten is in second place to St. Thomas for both passenger and crew expenditure. St. Maarten had held steady as the number one and preferred crew spending destination for several years, but missed the mark this time around.

Crew members spend on average US \$149.45 in St. Maarten while they shell out \$152.58 in St. Thomas. The

average crew spending in the Caribbean is \$89.24.

Cruise passengers spend \$147.98 in St. Maarten, but leave \$193 in St. Thomas after shopping. The average passenger spending in the Caribbean is \$97.26, according to the FCCA survey that was carried out when the world economy started to slide.

The last study was carried out in 2006 and listed St. Maarten as number one for crew expenditure at \$159 and second for passenger spending at \$145. Crew and passengers are spending less in St. Maarten on items the island considers its trademarks for shoppers: electronics, jewellery and food. Commissioner Heyliger said the results were not completely disheartening, but showed that aside from upgrading the infrastructure and making significant investments in Dr. A.C. Wathey Cruise and Cargo Facilities, the community and in particular merchants had to review their game plans to see where improvements were warranted.

Slipping from the top slot in crew spending is not a good sign, because passengers observe and seek advice from crew members about where to get the best deals on merchandise, he added.

The Harbour Group is exploring ways to boost spending onshore by passengers and crew, but merchants and other businesses must now add even more value and incentives to encourage spending, Heyliger said. "After all, the economy of St. Maarten depends on visitors' spending. The more revenue they leave here the better for the destination, but we have to

work a little harder to get them to spend."

A good building block for recapturing the top spot is the high visitor satisfaction with the overall destination. "We have a good recovery point. Cruise passengers and crew love to visit our island, but now we have to examine where they have lost confidence in the products we offer them. Once we address this deficiency we have a chance again at the top spot," Heyliger said.

St. Maarten has another plus on which to build. It is so far the only destination tipped to be ready for the new 220,000-tonne mega-cruise ship to be launched in December. There is much excitement and buzz about this behemoth and industry partners were given an update about St. Maarten's progress.

The mega-ship Oasis of the Sea and several other cruise ships are set to add St. Maarten to their itineraries this season. Also, the island expects to play host to a record 1.5 million cruise passengers in 2010-2011 as a direct result of a change in marketing strategy for the Harbour Group. Marketing is focused on emerging trends and more one-on-one meetings with cruise executives and itinerary planners.

"More ships and passengers can come to our shore through effective marketing. However, after the ships arrive here and passengers disembark, everyone – business owners and residents – has to do what is best to put the best foot forward to ensure they have a memorable vacation and are enticed to spend more in St. Maarten than anywhere else," Heyliger said. □



Stocks slide as new home sales fall

By **TIM PARADIS**,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Signs of a weaker housing market and a gloomier outlook on the economy gave investors more reasons to dump stocks. Major stocks indexes slid Wednesday after the Commerce Department said new home sales dropped for the first time in five months. Sales fell 3.6 percent in September to 402,000 from 417,000 in August, well below the 440,000 analysts had forecast.

The Dow Jones industrial average lost more than 100 points, or 1 percent. The Nasdaq composite index, which has more than doubled the gains of other major indicators this year, fell more than 2 percent.

The drops came as Goldman Sachs Group Inc. added to investors' unease by reducing its expectation for the nation's economic output for the July-September period. Goldman Sachs predicts third-quarter gross domestic product rose at an annual rate of 2.7 percent, weaker than its earlier forecast of 3 percent.

The government's report on third-quarter GDP is due Thursday. Economists are looking for growth at an annual rate of 3.3 percent after a record four straight quarters of contraction.

Analysts said the market's slide in the past week isn't surprising given the size of the advance in the last eight months and only mixed economic readings.

"I'm not panicked at the moment," said Manny Weintraub, president of Integre Advisors in New York. "I don't think anyone expected a super robust recovery."

Stocks struggled Tuesday after a disappointing report on consumer confidence stirred

worries about the strength of the coming holiday shopping period.

In the final hour of trading, the Dow fell 108.75, or 1.1 percent, to 9,773.42.

The broader Standard & Poor's 500 index fell for the fourth straight day, sliding 17.60, or 1.7 percent, to 1,045.81. The Nasdaq fell 49.89, or 2.4 percent, to 2,066.20.

Bill Schultz, chief investment officer at McQueen, Ball & Associates in Bethlehem, Pa., said investors are looking at the latest data and worrying that the market has risen too much in anticipation of a recovery. The S&P 500 index is up 57.2 percent from a 12-year low in March.

"You're starting to see some trepidation about how we move forward," he said. Schultz said the market is likely to stall without improvements in how much revenue companies bring in and better readings on unemployment.

With about half of the companies in the S&P 500 index having reported third-quarter results, revenue is down 7.5 percent from a year earlier, according Thomson Reuters. The unemployment rate stands at 9.8 percent and is expected to top 10 percent. Stocks have been falling most days since hitting their highest levels in a year at the start of last week. A strengthening dollar and falling commodities prices have weighed on stocks.

The ICE Futures US dollar index rose for a fifth straight day Wednesday, its longest gains since the start of July. Bond prices rose as investors sought safety from a falling stock market. That sent yields lower. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note fell to 3.41 percent from 3.45 percent late Tuesday.

Crude oil fell \$2.09 to \$77.46

per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The drop in oil weighed on shares of energy companies.

Oilfield services company Schlumberger Ltd. fell \$2.22, or 3.4 percent, to \$62.72.

Home builders fell after the sales data. Hovnanian Enterprises Inc. slid 37 cents, or 8.6 percent, to \$3.93. Toll Brothers Inc. fell 73 cents, or 4.1 percent, to \$17.21.

The drop in new home sales follows a report from the National Association of Realtors last week that sales of existing home posted the biggest increase in 26 years in September as buyers tried to get ahead of an expiring tax credit. New home sales make up a smaller part of overall sales than sales of existing homes.

Earnings reports touched off worries. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. tumbled after it predicted operating income will fall in North America in the fourth quarter. The company said its third-quarter profit more than doubled as it cut costs and added products. The stock fell \$3.55, or 21.2 percent, to \$13.19.

Drug distributor McKesson Corp. fell \$1.13, or 1.9 percent, to \$58.49 after the company's fiscal second-quarter earnings fell short of analysts' expectations.

Apollo Group Inc., parent of the University of Phoenix, fell after the for-profit higher education company said the Securities and Exchange Commission had launched an informal inquiry into how it accounts for revenue. The stock fell \$13.66, or 18.7 percent, to \$59.31.

In another sign of lingering troubles in the financial industry, GMAC Financial Services is in talks with the Treasury Department for a third bailout. □



Trader Jonathan Corpina, left, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

Metro jobless rates fall as more workers drop out

By **CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER**,
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — The unemployment rate fell in September in most metro areas, although that's largely because more people gave up on job searches than found new work.

"The job market is not recovering at all yet," said Jim Diffley, regional economist for IHS Global Insight. "We're looking at another jobless recovery."

The September unemployment rate fell in 223 of 380 metro areas, or about 59 percent. The jobless rate rose in 123 metro areas, and was unchanged in 34.

Thirteen metro areas reported unemployment above 15 percent, down from 16 the previous month.

But in many cases the drops were resulted from discouraged workers leaving the labor force, perhaps to return to school. Once unemployed workers stop looking for jobs, they are no longer counted in the unemployment rate.

Several metro areas in Wisconsin illustrate the trend: the state's unemployment rate dropped to 7.7 percent from 8.4 percent in August. Three of its cities saw significant improvement in their unemployment rates: Wausau, Eau Claire and Fond du Lac.

But the work force shrunk in all three cities, while the state lost about 21,000 jobs.

The trend also was evident nationwide last month, when 600,000 people looking for work threw in the towel, the Labor Department said earlier this month.

The metro employment figures, issued Wednesday by the Labor Department, aren't adjusted for seasonal changes, so they tend to be volatile from month to month. And many of the changes in local unemployment rates in September resulted from seasonal trends.

For example, the areas that saw the sharpest drops were largely agricultural, including Grand Forks, N.D., Yakima, Wash., and Wenatchee-East Wenatchee, Wash., and likely benefited from harvest-related hiring. □

"This Is It" heats up box office on first



Michael Jackson impersonators dance at the world premier of 'This is It', in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009. Jackson, 50 when he died last June, kept pace with backup dancers half his age during rehearsals for such hits as 'Thriller,' 'Billie Jean,' 'Beat It' and 'Human Nature.' The film was shot as Jackson prepared for a marathon concert stand in London that never happened.

(AP Photo/Wally Santana)

Mike Collett-White

Bob Tourtellotte

LONDON/LOS ANGELES (Reuters) – Michael Jackson fans poured out of cinemas on Wednesday applauding the new "This Is It" movie of the late pop star's final concert rehearsals and ringing up sales at box offices worldwide.

Columbia Pictures, the studio behind the movie, said the film took in \$2.2 million in late Tuesday night screenings in North America following its Los Angeles premiere, and early Wednesday matinee showings were surpassing that figure.

In international markets, where the film is expected to play strongly given the "Thriller" singer's huge global appeal, box office figures are still being collected, but "early indications already reveal strong attendance," Columbia said.

Fan excitement at the heavily hyped release of "This Is It" was mixed with sadness that one of music's biggest stars and most troubled celebrities died before he could bring his live comeback to the stage. "This Is It" was cut from 80 hours of film of the singer's rehearsals for 50 London concerts planned from July which he envisioned both as a return to the limelight after years of life as a recluse and a final farewell to live performance.

The nearly two-hour film features Jackson singing and dancing to some of

his biggest hits, including "Beat It," "Thriller," "Black or White" and "Man in the Mirror." Throughout the film, audiences see Jackson working with his singers and dancers to create a show that would wow his fans.

"It's great!" wrote Karen Portem on the Facebook social networking site, having seen the movie on its first day of release in the Philippines. "But it's so sad to think that people ... aren't able to see M.J. perform it live."

Critics have been largely positive, describing the film as a fitting tribute to a star who fascinated the world with his slick dance moves and versatile vocals as well as his increasingly bizarre appearance and legal troubles.

By midday Wednesday, "This Is It" had scored an 79 percent positive rating on website rottentomatoes.com, which combines reviews from around the United States.

Entertainment Weekly magazine's Owen Gleiberman gave the movie a grade of "B," saying "This Is It" is fun, but it's a slightly airless experience. If the movie allows you to bask in Michael Jackson's aura, it also uses his image to foster 'nostalgia' for a concert epiphany that never quite was."

LEGEND LIVES ON FILM Jackson died suddenly on June 25 in Los Angeles at

the age of 50 after suffering cardiac arrest only weeks before he was to have begun the "This Is It" concerts, denying him the chance to erase the stigma of a sensational 2005 trial when he was acquitted of child molestation charges.

He grew up as one of Motown legends The Jackson 5, made the gliding "moonwalk" famous the world over and still has the best-selling album of all time with his 1982 "Thriller."

After a star-studded opening in Los Angeles Tuesday night and premieres in 16 other cities, the film began playing in 99 countries Wednesday and will expand to about 110 territories by the weekend.

In Tokyo, pop star and Jackson friend Lionel Richie said he hoped the movie would bring out the ordinary in Jackson.

"The part that you're going to see tonight is the part of him being the real Michael, which is the hard-working guy but at the same time so easy to get along with -- the guy I know," he said.

Sony Corp's Columbia Pictures bought the film rights from concert promoter AEG Live for \$60 million and has described ticket demand as "phenomenal." Columbia has said the movie will be extended beyond its two-week run if ticket demand is high, and it plans a DVD release in 2010.

Meanwhile, the soundtrack to "This Is It" has generated sales roughly in the middle of expectations since hitting record stores Monday. Estimates suggest it should sell between 300,000 and 350,000 units in its first week, according to Silvio Pietroluongo, director of charts at Billboard magazine.

The final number depends on how many people see the movie and then feel inspired to buy the album, but regardless of the exact figure, Jackson "certainly looks like being number one (on the charts) by a considerable margin," Pietroluongo said.



FILE - In this Sept. 10, 1969 file photo, French designer Yves Saint Laurent stands outside the London branch of his store. The top-earning dead celebrity is French fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent, Forbes said Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009. Laurent earned \$350 million in the last year, according to the magazine.

(AP Photo/File)

Richest dead celebrity? It's not Michael Jackson

NEW YORK – According to Forbes magazine, the richest dead celebrity isn't Michael Jackson.

Although the King of Pop's estate has been big news since his death in June, the top-earning dead celebrity is French fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent. Forbes released its ninth annual poll Wednesday.

According to the magazine, Laurent earned \$350 million in the past year. Much of his estate was auctioned off at Christie's in February. Laurent died of brain cancer in June 2008.

Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein rank second with combined earnings of \$235 million, followed by Jackson with \$90 million, Elvis Presley with \$55 million and J.R.R. Tolkien with \$50 million. Charles Schulz, John Lennon, Theodor Geisel, Albert Einstein and Michael Crichton round out the top 10 list.



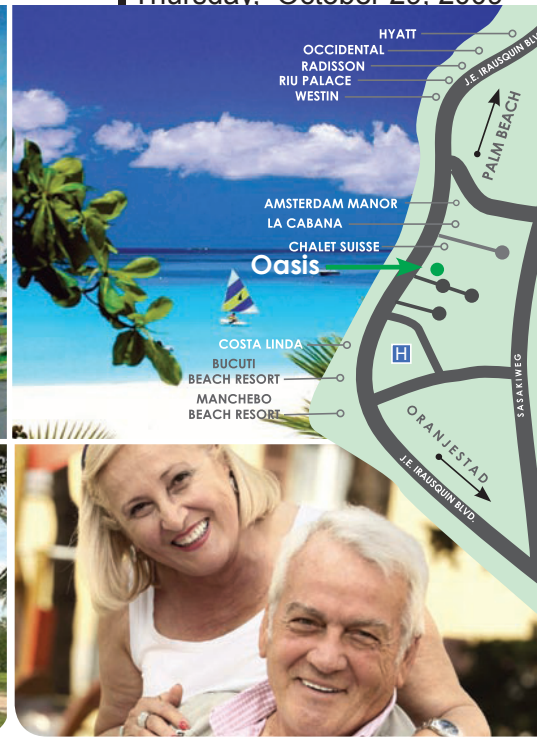
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with granite counter tops and a full stainless steel appliance package including washer and dryer. This 35-condominium complex will feature a beautiful swimming pool with a beach style entry with waterfalls and fountain and state of the art fiber optic lighting. The entrance of the building has a drive-up covered entrance and an elegant two-story lobby leading to the sun-filled hallways and corridors.

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President Barack Obama signs the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009, in the East Room of the White House in Washington. From left are, Joint Chiefs Chairman Adm. Michael Mullen, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Rep. Susan Davis, D-Calif. Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., Rep. Neil Abercrombie, D-Hawaii, Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Texas, Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., Rep. Jim Langevin, D-N.J., and Rep. Rob Andrews, D-N.J.

Associated Press

Feds: Leader of radical Islam group killed in raid

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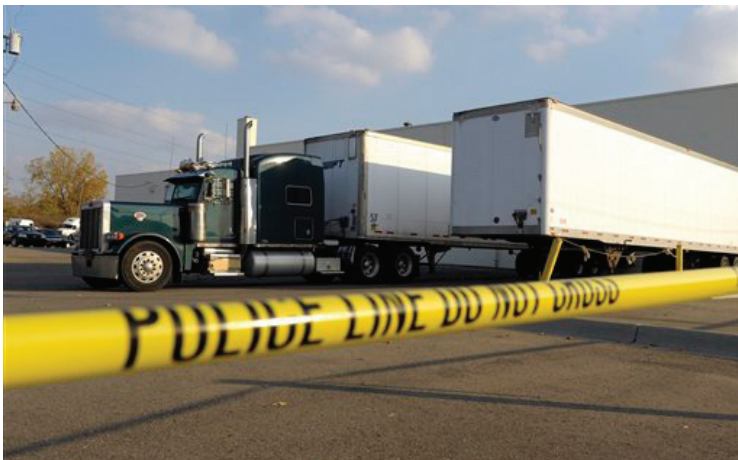
Associated Press Writer

DETROIT (AP) — A man described as a leader of a radical Sunni Islam group in the U.S. was fatally shot Wednesday afternoon while resisting arrest and exchanging gunfire with federal agents, authorities said.

Agents at a warehouse in Dearborn were trying to arrest Luqman Ameen Abdullah, 53, on charges that included conspiracy to sell stolen goods and illegal possession and sale of firearms. Ten followers listed in a criminal complaint were also being rounded up in the area.

Abdullah refused to surrender, fired a weapon and was killed by gunfire from agents, FBI spokeswoman Sandra Berchtold said.

In a court filing, the FBI said Abdullah, also known as Christopher Thomas, was an imam of a Black Muslim



Yellow police tape is seen outside a trucking and warehouse firm just north of Michigan Avenue in Dearborn, Mich. after an FBI raid on Wednesday Oct. 28, 2009. A man described as a leader of a radical Sunni Islam group was fatally shot Wednesday afternoon while resisting arrest and exchanging gunfire with federal agents, authorities said. Agents at a warehouse in Dearborn were trying to arrest Luqman Ameen Abdullah, 53, on charges that included conspiracy to sell stolen goods and illegal possession and sale of firearms.

Associated Press

radical group named Ummah whose primary mission is to establish an Islamic state within the United States. No one was charged with terrorism. But Abdullah was

“advocating and encouraging his followers to commit violent acts against the United States,” FBI agent Gary Leone said in an affidavit.

Continued on Page B5

Obama signs U.S. defense bill with hate crimes law

WASHINGTON (AP) — Trumpeting a victory against careless spending, President Barack Obama on Wednesday signed a defense bill that kills some costly U.S. weapons projects and expands war efforts. In a major civil rights change, the law also makes it a federal hate crime to assault people based on sexual orientation.

The \$680 billion policy bill authorizes spending but doesn't provide any actual dollars. Rather it sets guidance that is typically followed by congressional committees that decide appropriations. Obama hailed it as a step toward ending needless military spending that he called “an affront to the American people and to our troops.”

Still, the president did not win every fiscal fight. He acknowledged he was putting his name to a bill that still had waste.

The measure expands current hate crimes law to include violence based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. To assure its passage after years of frustrated efforts, Democratic supporters attached the measure to the must-pass defense policy bill over the stern objections of many Republicans.

Continued on Next Page



People gather at the site of explosion in Peshawar, Pakistan on Wednesday Oct. 28, 2009. A car bomb has torn through a market place in northwestern Pakistan, killing 86 people hours after U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arrived in the country.

Associated Press

Car bomb in crowded Pakistan market kills 100

RIAZ KHAN

ROBERT BURNS

Associated Press Writers

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP) — Suspected militants exploded a car bomb in a market crowded with women and children Wednesday, killing 100 people and turning shops selling wedding dresses, toys and jewelry into a mass of burning debris and bodies.

Continued on Page B7



Former Massachusetts Sen. Edward William Brooke speaks in the Rotunda on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009, during a ceremony where he received the Congressional Gold Medal.

DEFENSE BILL

Continued from Page B1

The White House put most of its focus on what the bill does contain: project after project that Obama billed as unneeded.

Associated Press

The bill terminates production of the F-22 fighter jet program, which has its origins in the Cold War era and, its critics maintain, is poorly suited for anti-insurgent battles in Iraq

and Afghanistan.

Obama and Defense Secretary Robert Gates targeted certain projects for elimination, putting them at odds with some lawmakers. The same spending items deemed unnecessary or outdated by Pentagon officials can mean lost jobs and political fallout for lawmakers back in their home districts.

"When Secretary Gates and I first proposed going after some of these wasteful projects, there were a lot of people who didn't think it was possible, who were certain we were going to lose, who were certain that we were going to get steamrolled," Obama said. "Today, we have proven them wrong."

In another of several examples, the legislation terminates the replacement helicopter program for the president's own fleet. That program is six years behind schedule and estimated costs have doubled to more than \$13 billion.

Yet the legislation still contains an effort by lawmakers to

continue development — over the president's strong objections — of a costly alternative engine for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the Air Force's fighter of the future. A White House veto threat about that never happened.

"There's still more fights that we need to win," Obama said. "Changing the culture in Washington will take time and sustained effort."

Obama signed the bill in the East Room, adding some fanfare to draw attention to his message of fiscal responsibility and support for the military.

He spoke more personally about the new civil rights protections. A priority of the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, a Democrat, that had been on the congressional agenda for a decade, the measure is named for Matthew Shepard, the gay Wyoming college student murdered 11 years ago.

Obama acknowledged Shepard's mother, Judy, and remembered that he had told her this day would come. He also acknowledged Kennedy's

family. Going forward, Obama promised, people will be protected from violence based on "what they look like, who they love, how they pray or why they are."

The expansion has long been sought by civil rights and gay rights groups. Conservatives have opposed it, arguing that it creates a special class of victims. They also have been concerned that it could silence clergymen or others opposed to homosexuality on religious or philosophical grounds.

On the military front, the legislation approves Obama's \$130 billion request as the latest installment of money toward the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The far-reaching law also prohibits the Obama administration from transferring any detainee being held at the Guantanamo Bay military prison in Cuba to the U.S. for trial until 45 days after it has given notice to Congress. Guantanamo prisoners could not be released into the U.S. □

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AP sources: Obama eyes smaller Afghan troop option

By ANNE GEARAN and MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is considering sending large numbers of additional U.S. forces to Afghanistan next year but fewer than his war commander, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, prefers, U.S. officials said.

Such a narrowed military mission would escalate American forces to accomplish the commander's broadest goals, protecting Afghan cities and key infrastructure. But the option's scaled-down troop numbers likely would cut back on McChrystal's ambitious objectives, amounting to what one official described as "McChrystal Light."

Under the pared-down option, McChrystal would be given fewer forces than the 40,000 additional troops he has asked for atop the current U.S. force of 68,000, officials told The Associated Press.

Senior White House officials stressed, however, that the president has not settled on any new troop numbers and continues to debate other strategic approaches to the 8-year-old Afghanistan war. The officials say Obama has not yet firmly settled on the narrowed option or any other as his final choice for how to overhaul the war effort.

Two officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because Obama has not announced his decision, said the troop numbers under the narrowed scenario probably would be lower than McChrystal's preference, at least at the outset. The officials did not divulge exact numbers.

The stripped-down version of McChrystal's plan still would adopt the commander's overall goals for a counterinsurgency strategy aimed at turning the corner against the Taliban next spring.

But that pared-down approach would reflect a shift in

thinking about what parts of the war mission are most important and the intense political domestic debate over Afghan policy.

A majority of Americans either oppose the war or question whether it is worth continuing to wage, according to public opinion polls dating to when Obama shook up the war's management and began a lengthy reconsideration of U.S. objectives earlier this year.

Any expansion of the war will displease some congressional Democrats, while Republicans are likely to accuse Obama of failing to give McChrystal all of what he requested.

A stripped-down approach would signal caution in widening a war that is going worse this year than last despite intense U.S. attention and an additional 21,000 U.S. forces on Obama's watch.

Fourteen Americans were killed Monday in Afghanistan in two helicopter crashes, and a spate of roadside bombings Tuesday left eight U.S. troops dead. October has been the worst month for U.S. fatalities since the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan began in October 2001.

Even if McChrystal gets less than he wants from Obama, the

U.S. may still end up adding more troops later in 2010. The most likely reason would be to fill voids left by some NATO allies who have been considering troop cutbacks.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has pushed back hard against a faction of administration officials, led by Vice President Joe Biden, who contend that much of the U.S. national security objective in Afghanistan could be accomplished by concentrating on strikes at al-Qaida along the Pakistan border. That approach would focus on hunting terrorists with missile-bearing, pilotless drones and could require little or no additional U.S. manpower. Gates has bridged both sides, officials said. Long wary of a large U.S. presence that could too easily look like an occupation army, he has suggested recently that he could support a carefully designed expansion.

Obama meets Friday with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the military leaders who would have the responsibility for carrying out his strategy decisions. White House officials said the president will continue to consider his options with advisers over the next couple of weeks, adding



A U.S. Army vehicle fires on Taliban positions on a mountain side, outside a base held by the Army's 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division in the Pech River Valley of Afghanistan's Kunar province, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009.

Associated Press

that other broad war council meetings may still be called during that period.

The White House preference is to announce the troop decision after the Afghanistan's run-off presidential election on Nov. 7, but before Obama leaves for a long and unrelated trip to Asia, four days later on Nov. 11. That timing is not assured, however, and no announcement plan has been settled upon by Obama and his aides, officials said.

Army and Marine Corps units would make up the bulk of any "surge" of U.S. forces, and the identification and training of specific units to be deployed

would start soon, in late winter and early spring.

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is on record supporting a troop increase. He has not quantified his preference, but he signed off on McChrystal's assessment of the worsening conditions in Afghanistan and the need for a change in both approach and boost in manpower.

Gates has not given a public opinion on McChrystal's request but has pushed for the commander's overarching strategy during recent weeks of review by the White House, officials said. □

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House Dems reach deal on key health care elements

By ERICA WERNER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — House Democrats reached agreement Wednesday on key elements of a health care bill that would vastly alter America's medical landscape, requiring virtually universal sign-ups and establishing a new government-run insurance option for millions.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi planned a formal announcement Thursday morning in front of the Capitol. Lawmakers said the legislation could be up for a vote on the House floor next week.

The rollout will cap months of arduous negotiations to bridge differences between liberal and moderate Democrats and blend health care overhaul bills passed by three separate committees over the summer. The developments in the House came as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., tried to round up support among moderate Democrats for his bill, which includes a modified government insurance option that states could opt out of.

Reid met Wednesday with Arkansas Sen. Blanche Lincoln, who faces a potentially tough re-election next year.

The final product in the House, reflecting many of President Barack Obama's priorities, includes new requirements for employers to offer insurance to their workers or face penalties, fines on Americans who don't purchase coverage and subsidies to help lower-income people do so. Insurance companies would face new prohibitions against charging much more to older people or denying coverage to people with health conditions.

Pelosi has also said the bill would strip the health insurance industry of a long-standing exemption from antitrust laws covering market allocation, price fixing and bid rigging.

The price tag, topping \$1 trillion over 10 years, would be paid for by taxing high-income people and cutting some \$500 billion in payments to Medicare providers. The legislation would extend health coverage to around 95 percent of Americans.



House Minority Leader John Boehner of Ohio, center, talks about health care during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009, from left are, Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich., left, Mike Pence, R-Ind., Pasty Drain, Boehner, Keith Damon, John Kline, R-Minn., and, Rep. John Shadegg, R-Ariz.

Republicans criticized the bill even before it was unveiled.

"Americans' health care is too important to risk on one gigantic bill that was negotiated behind closed doors," said Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich. "The Medicare cuts will hurt seniors, the tax increases will kill jobs and the government takeover of health care will increase premium costs."

One change expected to be revealed Thursday is that some of the provisions of the bill, which were set to take effect mostly in 2013, have been moved up so Americans would see the benefits of the legislation more quickly, according to Pelosi spokesman Nadeam Elshami.

"I'm pretty confident that we've got the right pieces in place," said Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, one of the three panels involved in writing the bill. "We can quibble over

parts of it, but the fact is when you're taking a 60-year-old system that grew up in a rather haphazard fashion and you're trying to bring some coherence to it, these are sort of the things you have to do at the beginning of that process."

Plenty of work remains to be done before a bill could land on Obama's desk — and there's still no guarantee that Congress can complete the legislation before year's end, as the president wants. If Obama does sign a health overhaul bill, he will have bucked decades of failed attempts by past administrations, most recently by former President Bill Clinton in the 1990s.

House leaders hope to finish the bill before Veteran's Day, Nov. 11. The Senate is aiming to start debate sometime in the next several weeks.

Bills passed by the House and Senate would have to be merged before a final product could be sent to Obama,

and there are a number of differences between the two chambers that would have to be reconciled. Among them are the different approaches to the public plan. The House does not include the opt-out provision for states, and it has more stringent requirements for employers. The Senate would use a tax on high-value insurance plans to pay for the bill, an approach that the House version doesn't have.

In the end, Pelosi, D-Calif., and other House leaders were unable to round up the necessary votes for their preferred version of the government insurance plan — one that would base payment rates to providers on rates paid by Medicare.

Instead, the Health and Human Services secretary would negotiate rates with providers, the approach preferred by moderates and the one that will be featured in the Senate's version. □

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ISLAM LEADER KILLED

Continued from Page B1

"He regularly preaches anti-government and anti-law enforcement rhetoric," Leone said. "Abdullah and his followers have trained regularly in the use of firearms, and continue to train in martial arts and sword fighting." Leone said members of the national group mostly are black and some converted to Islam while in prisons across the United States. "Abdullah preaches that every Muslim should have a weapon, and should not be scared to use their weapon when needed," Leone wrote.

It was not immediately clear how many of the other 10 suspects were in custody. The group believes that a separate Islamic state in the U.S. would be controlled by Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, formerly known as H. Rap

Brown, who is serving a life sentence in a federal prison in Colorado for shooting two police officers in Georgia in 2000, Leone said. Al-Amin, a veteran of the black power movement, started the group after he converted to Islam in prison.

"They're not taking their cues from overseas," said Jimmy Jones, a professor of world religions at Manhattanville College and a longtime Muslim prison chaplain. "This group is very much American born and bred."

The movement at one time was believed to include a couple of dozen mosques around the country. Ummah is now dwarfed in numbers and influence by other African-American Muslim groups, particularly the mainstream Sunnis who were led by Imam W.D. Mohammed, who recently died.

By evening, authorities still were working the scene near the Detroit-Dearborn border and the warehouse was surrounded by police tape. The U.S. attorney's office said an FBI dog was also killed during the shootout.

Abdullah's mosque is in a brick duplex on a quiet, residential street in Detroit. A sign on the door in English and Arabic reads, in part, "There is no God but Allah." Several men congregated on the porch Wednesday night and subsequently attacked a photographer from The Detroit News who was taking pictures from across the street. Ricardo Thomas had his camera equipment smashed and had a bloody lip from the attack.

Imad Hamad, regional director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in Dearborn, said



Imad Hamad, regional director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in Dearborn is shown outside a warehouse in Dearborn, Mich. on Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009. A man described as a leader of a radical Sunni Islam group was fatally shot Wednesday afternoon while resisting arrest and exchanging gunfire with federal agents, authorities said.

Associated Press

the FBI had briefed him about "We know that this is not Wednesday's raids and told something to be projected as him they were the result of a something against Muslims," Hamad said. □



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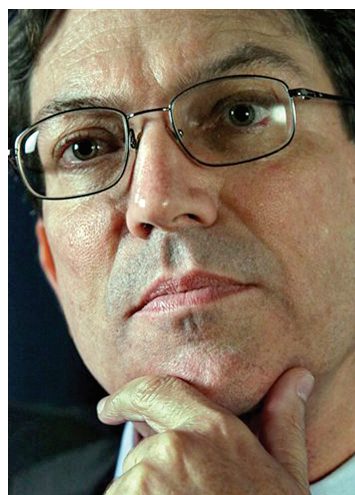


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U.N. vote condemns U.S. embargo on Cuba



Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez, right, is interviewed at the United Nations headquarters on Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009 after the U.N. General Assembly voted 187-3 to condemn the 47-year U.S. trade embargo on Cuba.

Associated Press

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PAUL HAVEN

Associated Press Writer

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N. General Assembly on Wednesday overwhelmingly condemned the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba, an annual ritual that highlights global opposition to the policy.

This year's vote was 187-3 in opposition to the embargo, up from 185-3 last year, with only Israel and the tiny Pacific island nation of Palau supporting the United States. Micronesia and the Marshall Islands abstained both years.

It was the 18th year in a row that the General Assembly has taken up the symbolic measure, with Washington steadily losing what little support it once had.

Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez ticked off a long list of grievances in his speech before the world body, saying the 47-year-old embargo — which the Cubans refer to as a blockade — had cost the island's fragile economy tens of billions of dollars over the years and prevented Cuban children from getting

needed medical care.

"The blockade is an uncultured act of arrogance," Rodriguez said. He likened the policy to "an act of genocide" that is "ethically unacceptable."

One after another, global representatives stood to speak in opposition to the embargo, calling it a cruel anachronism that ran counter to international law and that only succeeded in hurting ordinary Cubans, particularly women and children.

It was the first time the world body has taken the vote since President Barack Obama took office in January, promising to extend a hand of friendship to Washington's traditional enemies.

The administration has loosened financial and travel restrictions on Americans with relatives in Cuba, and started talks aimed at restoring direct mail links.

It sent a senior diplomat to Havana in September for unannounced meetings with Cuban officials that were believed to be the highest-level talks between the two countries in decades.

Still, Washington has made clear it is not prepared to lift the embargo until Cuba accepts some political, economic and financial changes.

Rodriguez said the question of the embargo represented a "test of character" for the U.S. and its new president.

"President Obama has a historical opportunity to lead a change of policy toward Cuba and the lifting of the blockade," he said, but lamented that "since the election" of the new U.S. leader "there has not been any change in the implementation of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba."

U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice reacted strongly, calling Rodriguez's statements "hostile" and "straight out of the Cold War era."

Still, she said the Obama administration was committed to writing "a new chapter to this old story" by engaging with the Cuban government.

"We hope they can be the starting point for further changes in the relationship," she said. □



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PG-13	KNOWING					NEW
	daily:	6:00	8:45			
	matinee:			late show:	11:30	
PG	CIRQUE DU FREAK					NEW
	daily:	6:00	8:30			
	matinee:	1:00	3:30	late show:	11:00	
PG	FAME					
	daily:	5:00				
	matinee:	12:00	2:30	late show:		
R	THE PRIVATE LIVE OF PIPPA LEE					
	daily:	7:30	9:45			
	matinee:				12:00	
PG	TOY STORY 2 3D					3D
	daily:	4:00				
	matinee:	12:00	2:00	late show:		
PG	HET GEHEIM VAN MEGA MINDY					
	daily:	4:30	6:15	8:15	10:00	
	matinee:	12:30	2:30	late show:	12:00	
R	THE STEPFATHER					
	daily:	6:15	8:30			
	matinee:	1:15	3:45	late show:	11:00	

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PG	THIS IS IT MICHAEL JACKSON					NEW
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PG	ASTRO BOY					NEW
	daily:	4:30	6:45			
	matinee:	12:00	2:15	late show:		
PG	TOY STORY 2 3D					3D
	daily:	4:15	6:15			
	matinee:	12:15	2:15	late show:		
R	LAW ABIDING CITIZEN					
	daily:	6:00	8:15			
	matinee:	12:30	3:15	late show:	11:30	
R	ZOMBIELAND					
	daily:	8:15	10:15			
	matinee:		late show:	12:30		
PG-13	SURROGATES					
	daily:	9:00				
	matinee:		late show:	11:30		
PG-13	THE STEPFATHER					
	daily:	6:00	8:30			
	matinee:	12:45	3:15	late show:	11:00	
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CAR BOMB

Continued from Page B1

The attack in the northwestern city of Peshawar was Pakistan's deadliest since 2007 and came as U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton visited the country to offer support for its fight against a strengthening al-Qaida and Taliban-led insurgency based along the Afghan border. Clinton was three hours' drive away in the capital meeting Pakistani government leaders when the bomb went off in Peshawar. Her trip was not announced in advance in Pakistan for security reasons. The bomb was directed squarely at civilians, unlike many previous blasts that have targeted security forces or government or Western interests. While no one claimed responsibility, the bomb appeared aimed at undercutting public and political support for an ongoing army offensive against militants close to the frontier and showing that the government was unable to keep its people safe. The shaky, U.S.-backed government said the bombing — the latest in a series this month — had strengthened its resolve to press ahead with the assault in the South Waziristan border region, a militant stronghold and a global training and operations hub for al-Qaida. At least 60 of the dead were

women and children. Most security analysts said the attack could backfire on the insurgents and lead more people to inform on them. "He who kills a Muslim has no place but hell," said Mumtaz Ali, a wounded 19-year-old who was studying in a Muslim school attached to a mosque that was damaged in the attack. "We are taught the way of the prophet. We are not taught to kill innocent people." The U.S. believes fighting the insurgents on the frontier is vital to defeating extremism in Pakistan as well as in Afghanistan, where Taliban militants with links to those in Pakistan are waging an ever more violent campaign against American and NATO troops. Underlining the threat in both nations, Taliban militants in suicide vests stormed a guest house used by U.N. staff in the heart of the Afghan capital on Wednesday, killing 11 people — six of them U.N. staff, including one American. The bombing just before 1:15 p.m. destroyed much of the Mina Bazaar in Peshawar's old town, a warren of narrow alleys clogged with stalls, shops and food sellers. The district drew mostly poor female shoppers and their children in this conservative city. Fire swept through the area after the blast, sending a cloud of gray smoke into the air.

The wounded sat amid burning debris and parts of bodies. Men tried to pull survivors from beneath wreckage. One carried away a baby with a bloody face and a group of men rescued a young boy covered in dust, but others found only bodies of the dead. "My son died here," one man cried. A two-story building collapsed as firefighters doused it with water, causing more panic. Several hours later, people were still searching the debris for loved ones. "There was a deafening sound, and I was like a blind man for a few minutes," said Mohammad Usman, who was wounded in the shoulder. "I heard women and children crying and started to help others. There was the smell of human flesh in the air." Mian Iftikhar Hussain, information minister of North West Frontier Province, said 100 people had died and more than 200 were wounded. Clinton was a few hours into her first visit to Pakistan as secretary of state when the bomb exploded. "I want you to know this fight is not Pakistan's alone," she said at a news conference that many Pakistani TV stations broadcast alongside images of burning buildings and wounded victims. "These extremists are committed to destroying what is dear to us as



much as they are committed to destroying that which is dear to you and to all people. So this is our struggle as well." Standing beside her, Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said the attack would not break the government's will. "Theresolveanddetermination will not be shaken," Qureshi said. "People are carrying out such heinous crimes. They want to shake our resolve. I want to address them: We will not buckle. We will fight you." Clinton's three-day visit is designed to get maximum public exposure to improve America's image in a country where many people dislike and distrust the United States. She plans to meet with students, business leaders and opposition figures, as well as government and military leaders. "It is fair to say there have

been a lot of misconceptions about what the United States intends for our relationship with Pakistan," Clinton told reporters flying with her. "It is unfortunate there are those who question our motives. I want to clear the air." Peshawar, the economic hub of the northwest and the seat of the provincial government, has long been a favorite target of militants who control large parts of nearby tribal regions near the Afghan border. Extremism has flourished there since it was used as a staging ground in the 1980s for U.S.-funded fighters preparing to battle the Soviet-installed regime in Afghanistan. The attack brought the death toll from militant bombings or commando-style raids to more than 300 in October alone. Three blasts have taken place in Peshawar, including another attack in a nearby market that killed 50. □

Gunmen storm U.N. guest house in Kabul, 12 dead



Kai Eide, chief of the United Nations mission in Afghanistan, speaks during a press conference regarding an attack on a guest house used by U.N. Staff in Kabul, Afghanistan on Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009. Taliban militants wearing suicide vests stormed the guest house used by U.N. staff in the heart of the Afghan capital early Wednesday in the biggest in a series of attacks intended to undermine next month's presidential runoff election.

Associated Press

AMIR SHAH,
RAHIM FAIEZ

Associated Press Writers

KABUL (AP) — Taliban militants wearing suicide vests and police uniforms stormed a guest house used by U.N. staff in the heart of the Afghan capital early Wednesday, killing 12 people — including six U.N. staff. It was the biggest in a series of attacks intended to undermine next month's presidential runoff election.

A Taliban spokesman claimed responsibility for the early

morning assaults, which also included rocket attacks at the presidential palace and the city's main luxury hotel.

The chief of the United Nations mission in Afghanistan, Kai Eide, said the attack "will not deter the U.N. from continuing all its work" in the country. One of the six U.N. dead was an American, the U.S. Embassy said.

The two-hour attack on the guest house where some 20 U.N. election workers were staying sent people running and screaming outside, with

some jumping out upper-story windows to escape a fire that broke out. One American man said he held off the assailants with a Kalashnikov rifle until guests were able to escape.

One rocket struck the "outer limit" of the presidential palace but caused no casualties, presidential spokesman Humayun Hamidzada said. Two more rockets slammed into the grounds of the Serena Hotel, which is favored by many foreigners.

One failed to explode but filled the hotel lobby with smoke, forcing guests and employees to flee to the basement, according to an Afghan witness who asked that his name not be used for security reasons.

President Hamid Karzai condemned the attack as "an inhuman act" and called on the army and police to strengthen security around all international institutions.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the attacks in a telephone call to The Associated Press, saying three militants with suicide vests, grenades and machine guns carried out the guest house assault.

He said three days ago that the Taliban issued a statement threatening anyone working on the Nov. 7 runoff election between Karzai and Abdullah Abdullah.

"This is our first attack," he said.

An official with the U.N. election team said that the Bakhtar guest house was home to the largest concentration of U.N. election workers in the city. The official, who was not authorized to speak to the press so spoke anonymously, did not give a specific number of election workers staying there, but said it was around 20.

Witnesses said the attack started shortly before 6 a.m. and lasted for about two hours. Interior Ministry officials said the attackers were wearing old-style police uniforms, which are available in markets. In the southern city of Kandahar, security officials also warned international organizations to be alert to possible suicide attacks.

U.N. spokesman Adrian Edwards said six U.N. staff were killed and nine other U.N. employees were wounded in the assault, which began about dawn in the Shar-e-Naw area of the city. Terrified guests fled the building during the assault — some screaming for help and others jumping from upper floors as flames engulfed part of the three-story building.

Afghan police and U.N. officials said 12 people in all were killed, including the U.N. staff, three attackers, two security guards and an Afghan civilian. The bodies of the attackers were taken out of the house and sent for autopsies, said Gul Mohammad, an officer at the scene.

It was not immediately known how the victims were killed or how the fire started, but witnesses said they heard prolonged gunfire ringing from the house before police arrived at the scene. It also was not immediately clear whether there were any other attackers besides the three killed.

Police were seen pulling the charred body of what appeared to be a woman from a second-floor bedroom. One officer carried an injured German man by piggyback away from the scene.

Terrified guests scrambled over the roof or jumped from windows to escape.

John Turner, a trucking contractor from Kansas City, Mo., said he held off attackers with a Kalashnikov until a group of guests escaped through the laundry room. Miles Robertson, an Australian working as an election adviser, said he and his wife put wet towels over their faces and fled when the room next door caught fire.

Edwards said officials were trying to account for several other U.N. workers who were staying at the guest house. He did not know their nationalities but said they were non-Afghans.

"This has clearly been a very serious incident for us," Edwards said. "We've not had an incident like this in the past."

Edwards said the U.N. would have to evaluate "what

this means for our work in Afghanistan." The Aug. 19, 2003, truck bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad, which killed 22 people, prompted the U.N. to pull out of Iraq for several years.

A security guard, Noor Allah, said he saw a woman screaming for help in English from a second-story window and watched as terrified guests leapt from windows. Afghan police using ladders rescued at least one wounded foreigner.

Afghans are to vote Nov. 7 in a second-round election after U.N.-backed auditors threw out nearly a third of Karzai's votes from the Aug. 20 ballot, determining widespread fraud. That pushed Karzai's totals below the 50 percent threshold needed for a first-round victory in the 36-candidate field.

The Taliban has warned Afghans to stay away from the polls or risk attacks. Dozens of people were killed in Taliban attacks during the August balloting, helping drive down turnout.

Mir Ahmed Formoly, 64, who lives near the guest house, said he heard the commotion and went outside where he saw muzzle flashes in the early morning light.

"I was so scared," he said. "I went back inside the house." He said gunfire and explosions lasted about two hours, punctuated by shouts and screams.

Mohammad Ayub, a shopkeeper who lives a few doors down from the attacked house, said he heard gunfire shortly before dawn. He assumed at first that it was an attack on a house belonging to relatives of President Karzai nearby, then saw that it was a different building.

"It was early morning, but I didn't have a watch on to know when. It was dark. Shooting started around this private guest house. I heard some shouts coming from inside the house," Ayub said.

"I heard 'Boom! Boom!' several times. The fighting went on inside for about 10 or 15 minutes before the police came," he said.

The guest house attack was the third major assault in the capital in recent weeks. □

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Photo by Diane Keijzer

Coyotes kill woman on hike in Canadian park

ROB GILLIES

Associated Press Writer

TORONTO (AP) — Two coyotes attacked a promising young musician as she was hiking alone in a national park in eastern Canada, and authorities said she died Wednesday of her injuries. The victim was identified as Taylor Mitchell, 19, a singer-songwriter from Toronto who was touring her new album on the East Coast. She was hiking solo on a trail in Cape Breton Highlands

National Park in Nova Scotia on Tuesday when the attack occurred. She was airlifted to a Halifax hospital in critical condition and died Wednesday morning, authorities said. Coyotes, which also are known as prairie wolves, are found from Central America to the United States and Canada. Wildlife biologist Bob Bancroft said coyote attacks are extremely rare because the animals are usually shy. Bancroft, a retired biologist with Nova Scotia's Department

of Natural Resources, said it's possible the coyotes thought Mitchell was a deer or other prey. "It's very unusual and is not likely to be repeated," Bancroft said. "We shouldn't assume that coyotes are suddenly going to become the big bad wolf."

Royal Canadian Mounted Police spokeswoman Brigdit Leger said other hikers heard Mitchell's screams for help on Tuesday and called emergency police dispatchers.



This undated promotional photo released by LW Communications shows Taylor Mitchell, 19. She was airlifted to a Halifax hospital in critical condition and died Wednesday morning, authorities said.

Guinea strike marks one month since bloody massacre



This Oct. 5, 2009 file photo shows Guinea's military leader Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara saluting as Burkina Faso's President Blaise Compaore, unseen arrives at the airport, in Conakry, Guinea. A deal announced last week by the West African country's military junta offers China International Fund, a little-known Chinese company, access to Guinea's bauxite and other minerals and could provide major revenues to a government facing international isolation. Guinea's soldiers opened fire on demonstrators late last month, killing up to 157, and raped women in public.

Associated Press

ABOU BAKR,

Associated Press Writer

CONAKRY, Guinea (AP) — Tens of thousands of workers went on strike Wednesday to mark the one-month anniversary of a massacre in which troops fatally shot pro-democracy demonstrators and raped women in broad daylight, officials and workers said. Meanwhile, organizers said that dozens of people were going on a five-day hunger strike to protest the Sept. 28 violence in the West African nation.

"I am tired, I am ashamed of what the women underwent at the stadium," said participant Halimatou Barry. "It is atrocious ... It is necessary that justice is done."

Most of the capital's private businesses, shops and government offices were closed as part of the general strike Wednesday. Opposition member Mohamed Camara estimated that only 3,000 of some 97,000 government workers reported to work and said that many residents elsewhere in the country also

heeded the call to strike.

Guinea's government cautioned workers against causing unrest. The government supported unions' calls for two days of national mourning earlier this month but did not endorse Wednesday's strike. "We will not attack citizens, but we will not tolerate troublemakers," said anti-riot police force member Lt. Samoura Keita. Interior Minister Frederick Kollie, speaking on state media, said the strike was called by "troublemakers who wish for foreign intervention in the country." □

Police who were in the area reached the scene quickly and shot one of the animals, apparently wounding it. But the wounded animal and a companion coyote managed to get away.

Paul Maynard of Emergency Health Services said Mitchell already was in critical condition when paramedics arrived on the scene and had multiple bite wounds over her entire body.

"She was losing a considerable amount of blood from the wounds," he said.

An official with Parks Canada said they blocked the entrance to the trail where Mitchell was attacked and were trying to find the animals to determine what prompted such an unusual attack.

Associated Press

"There's been some reports of aggressive animals, so it's not unknown," said Helene Robichaud, the park's superintendent. "But we certainly never have had anything so dramatic and tragic."

Mitchell was an up-and-coming folk and country musician who was nominated for a 2009 Canadian Folk Music Award in the Young Performer of the Year category.

"Words can't begin to express the sadness and tragedy of losing such a sweet, compassionate, vibrant, and phenomenally talented young woman," Lisa Weitz, Mitchell's manager, said in an e-mail. "She just turned 19 two months ago, and was so excited about the future." □



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Whan named new LPGA commissioner

NEW YORK (AP) — The LPGA Tour has picked Michael Whan to be its new commissioner, turning to a former marketing executive in golf and hockey equipment to rebuild the tour's relationships with sponsors.

Whan previously worked for TaylorMade and Wilson golf companies and most recently was president of Mission-Itech Hockey.

"I was that crazy high school kid cutting greens at 5:30 in the morning so he could play free golf in the afternoon and caddying on Sundays," Whan said Wednesday, during an introductory news conference at Madison Square Garden.

He was selected following a three-month search to replace Carolyn Bivens, whom the players forced out in July as the LPGA Tour kept losing sponsors.

"Certainly he's got the business savvy to function in the challenging role of the commissioner," said Dawn Hudson, chair of the LPGA board of directors. "He's worked in the sports industry and specifically the golf industry."

NBA Roundup

Celtics defeat Cavaliers 95-89 in NBA opener



Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, right, and teammates from left, Sasha Vujacic, Jordan Farmar, Andrew Bynum celebrate their championship ring in during a ceremony before the start of an NBA basketball game against the Los Angeles Clippers, Tuesday, Oct. 27, 2009, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Boston Celtics beat Cleveland 95-89 in the NBA season opener on Tuesday, spoiling the hyped debut of the Cavaliers with LeBron James and Shaquille O'Neal.

James, the league MVP, and O'Neal were shaded by Boston's reunited Big Three. Paul Pierce scored 23 points, Ray Allen 16 and Kevin Garnett 13 in his first

regular-season game since last March.

Pierce made two crucial jumpers and two free throws in the final 1:03 to pace the Celtics, whose drive to a second straight NBA title was derailed when Garnett injured his knee late last season. Rasheed Wallace, added as a free agent during the offseason, had 12 points.

James scored 38 and O'Neal



Michael Whan poses for photographers during a press conference announcing his appointment as the new Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) Commissioner Wednesday Oct. 28, 2009 in New York.

Associated Press

"He appreciates women's golf and isn't daunted by the challenges we face, but rather sees the tremendous opportunities that lie ahead for the LPGA."

Acting commissioner Marty Evans will stay on the rest of the year. Whan will start in January. □

Chiefs suspend RB Larry Johnson

By DOUG TUCKER

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Running back Larry Johnson, who made two gay slurs within a 24-hour period and has a history of poor behavior both on and off the field, was given what amounts to a one-game suspension Wednesday night by the Kansas City Chiefs.

Missing one game check will cost the troubled former Pro Bowler about \$213,000.

In a three-sentence release, the Chiefs said Johnson would be suspended until Monday, Nov. 9. The team is on its bye week and will not play again until traveling to Jacksonville on Nov. 8.

The Chiefs had been saying for three days that they were "investigating" the situation. Johnson was told to stay away from the team on Tuesday.

In 2007, Johnson signed a five-year contract extension that guaranteed him about \$19 million and could be worth as much as \$45 million. But because of these latest problems, his future with the Chiefs beyond Nov. 8 may still be cloudy.

Coach Todd Haley and first-year general manager Scott Pioli have repeatedly said they are trying to build a new culture and a new attitude for a struggling franchise which has sunk to the bottom of the NFL and that disloyalty will not be tolerated.

A two-time Pro Bowler who needs just 75 yards rushing to break the team's career record, Johnson first used the gay slur on his Twitter account in an exchange with one of his followers on Sunday night. □

added 10 points and 10 rebounds for the Cavaliers.

At Dallas, Gilbert Arenas had 29 points and nine assists to help stake Washington to an early lead over revamped Dallas in Flip Saunders' debut as Wizards coach.

Arenas shot 10 of 21 and made 8-of-9 free throws for his most points since Nov. 14, 2007. He played only 13 games that season, then had a total of 26 points in two games last season, all because of knee problems. He's feeling so good now that he's not even wearing a brace.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 34 points, but was only 10 of 25. He was 12 of 13 from the foul line — all in the first half. Shawn Marion had 16 points, seven rebounds and three blocks in his Dallas debut, but didn't have any baskets in the middle two quarters.

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 33 points and Andrew Bynum added 26 on his 22nd birthday as the reigning NBA champions opened defense of their title by beating Staples Center co-tenants the Los

Angeles Clippers, who played without injured No. 1 overall draft pick Blake Griffin.

Ron Artest scored 10 points in his debut in the starting lineup. Pau Gasol sat out with a strained right hamstring and was replaced by Lamar Odom, who had 16 points and 13 rebounds.

Eric Gordon scored 21 points for the Clippers, who lost their ninth in a row to the Lakers. Chris Kaman added 18 points and 16 rebounds, Marcus Camby had 14 points, and reserve Craig Smith 12. Baron Davis was held to two points on 1 of 10 shooting.

At Portland, Oregon, reserve Travis Outlaw scored 23 points as Portland beat Houston in the season opener.

Brandon Roy added 20 points and five assists for the Blazers. Portland hit 20 of 22 free throws and outrebounded Houston 51-33.

Other season opening games were, Boston 95, Cleveland 89; Washington 102, Dallas 91; Portland 96, Houston 87; and L.A. Lakers 99, L.A. Clippers 92. □



Detroit Red Wings' Todd Bertuzzi, left to right, Jason Williams and Valtteri Filppula, of Finland, celebrate after Williams scoring the game-winning goal as Vancouver Canucks' Alex Burrows, bottom right, skates away during third period NHL action in Vancouver, B.C., on Tuesday Oct. 27, 2009.

Associated Press

NHL Roundup

Williams lifts Red Wings past Canucks

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Jason Williams scored a power-play goal with 5:03 left in a wild third period to lead the Detroit Red Wings to a 5-4 victory over the Vancouver Canucks on Tuesday.

Pavel Datsyuk scored his first two goals of the season for Detroit in a third period that featured six goals and three comebacks. Datsyuk's second score put the Red Wings ahead for the first time, but Henrik Sedin scored his second of the game on a 5-on-3 power play to tie it with 7:57 left.

Tomas Holmstrom had a goal and an assist and Niklas Kronwall also scored as the Red Wings snapped a three-game winless skid.

Christian Ehrhoff and Mathieu Schneider also scored and Roberto Luongo finished with 37 saves for the Canucks (6-6-0).

At Edmonton, Alberta, Craig Anderson stopped 25 shots for his second shutout of the season to lead Colorado past Edmonton.

Wojtek Wolski had two goals and Milan Hejduk also scored as the Avalanche (9-1-2) won their third in a row and fifth of their last six.

The Oilers have now lost three in a row and have not scored in their last seven periods, stretching to the second period of a 5-2 loss at Calgary on Saturday. Edmonton was then blanked 2-0 at Vancouver on Sunday.

At Washington, Alexander Semin returned from a two-game absence with a tiebreaking goal and two assists as Washington to beat Philadelphia for its fifth straight win.

Alex Ovechkin scored twice — including an empty-netter in the final minute — and Nicklas Backstrom had four points for the Capitals. Jose Theodore stopped Darroll Powe's penalty shot in the third period for the Southeast Division leaders, who rallied from a 2-0 deficit.

In other NHL games it was, Washington 4, Philadelphia 2; Colorado 3, Edmonton 0; and Detroit 5, Vancouver 4. □

Phelps leads U.S. team into duel against Europe

PAUL NEWBERRY,
AP National Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Michael Phelps will lead the U.S. against Europe at the Duel in the Pool in December, likely the last major international meet for high-tech bodysuits. USA Swimming announced a 36-strong team on Wednesday to face a combined squad from Britain, Germany and Italy at Manchester, England, on Dec. 18-19. The Americans won the last three Duels, all against Australia.

The squad includes 17 Olympians, including Phelps, who broke Mark Spitz's Olympic record by winning eight gold medals at the 2008 Beijing Games and was coming off another strong performance at the world championships in Rome this past summer.

Olympic gold medalists Ryan Lochte, Aaron Peirsol and Rebecca Soni also were selected, as was Jessica Hardy, who'll be competing in her first major international meet since completing a one-year ban for a failed doping test. The European team has yet to be announced.

"We have a good team going," Lochte said. "We're just going to go out there and have some fun. That's what this meet is about, having fun and racing."



FILE - In this Aug. 2, 2009, file photo, Michael Phelps of the United States, swims to the gold medal of the Men's 4x100m Medley Relay at the FINA Swimming World Championships in Rome.

Associated Press

The meet also is expected to serve as the last hurrah for sleek bodysuits that helped rewrite the record book over the past two years.

New standards are scheduled to take effect in January, limiting males to old-style suits from the waist to just above the knees and requiring females to wear suits that only cover the area from the shoulders to the top of the knees. FINA passed the rules during the world championships, where 43 world records were set.

USA Swimming has already put the new rules into effect for its sanctioned meets and had hoped that Duel in the Pool would fall under the guidelines, too. But this meet

is just before the new standards take effect, providing the chance for one last assault on the record book.

"I'm comfortable with wearing the same suit I wore at worlds," said Lochte, referring to Speedo's LZR Racer. "But we're all going to be ready, no matter what suit we're wearing. The suit doesn't make the swimmer, the swimmer makes the suit." Phelps has already said he'll switch to the old suit when he competes in two European World Cup meets next month and at the Duel in the Pool — even though it could put him at a disadvantage against swimmers still wearing suits that cover more of the body. □



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Injury ends Dina Safina's season, claim to No 1 ranking

MATTIAS KAREN

AP Sports Writer

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Dinara Safina finished the best year of her career with tears in her eyes on Wednesday, as a serious back injury ended her season and her hold on the No. 1 ranking she owned for much of 2009.

Safina lasted just 13 minutes in her first round-robin match of the Sony Ericsson Championships before calling it quits while serving at 1-1 against Jelena Jankovic.

Her withdrawal meant she lost the year-end No. 1 ranking to Serena Williams, a sour ending to a season that saw her become firmly established as one of the sport's top stars.

"I did everything possible to play here," Safina said. "As I was chasing this No. 1 (ranking), I was fighting with my body."

After stopping play in the third game, a teary-eyed Safina walked over to her chair and covered her face with a towel before retiring. She said one of the discs in her lower back was "starting to fracture," and that she has been dealing with the pain for three months.

"Maybe I had to stop after the U.S. Open. But then for two tournaments, let's say Beijing and Tokyo, it was



Serena Williams of the United States, left, shakes hands with her sister Venus Williams of the United States, right, after Serena won their singles match at the WTA Tennis Championships, in Doha, Qatar Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2009.

quiet, it didn't bother me that much," she said. "But then my body just gave up." Now she faces six weeks of rest before stepping back on the court, and a potentially long rehabilitation process. "I have to work on my muscles, on my core stability," she said. "As I'm tall, I need to be strong, so I can hold myself. This is going to be a very long procedure."

In fact, she is worried she

might not be fit enough to play in the Australian Open in late January.

"When I speak with the doctors, it doesn't sound so good," Safina said. "It is possible I may have to skip it."

She was the runner-up this year to Williams and lost the French Open final to Svetlana Kuznetsova, leaving her still looking for her first Grand Slam title — a blotch

Associated Press

on her record that has led to persistent questions about her claim to the top ranking.

But she has been one of the most consistent performers throughout the year, winning titles in Rome, Madrid and Portoroz, and holding the top spot for 26 weeks.

"Definitely I had my best year so far," she said. "I mean, I can just be proud of myself." □

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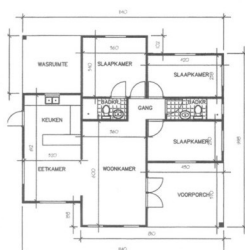
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Enviados EEUU llegan a Honduras para impulsar acuerdo

TEGUCIGALPA (Reuters)

- Funcionarios de Estados Unidos llegaron el miércoles a Honduras para presionar por un acuerdo entre el Gobierno de facto y el depuesto presidente Manuel Zelaya, en lo que podría ser el último intento por superar la crisis del país.

Honduras está sumergida en una crisis política desde que un grupo de militares sacó hace cuatro meses a Zelaya del Gobierno y lo expulsó del país, acusándolo de violar la Constitución.

Zelaya insiste en su restitución -incluso aunque se le impongan condiciones- pero el presidente de facto de Honduras, Roberto Micheletti, asegura que eso no va a pasar y que cualquier acuerdo debe esperar hasta después de las elecciones presidenciales del 29 de noviembre.

“La restitución del ex mandatario Manuel Zelaya, está claro que no estará contemplada en un posible acuerdo entre las dos comisiones por ser inconstitucional”, insistió Micheletti en un comunicado



El depuesto presidente de Honduras Manuel Zelaya habla en una reunión en la embajada de Brasil en Tegucigalpa, 28 oct 2009. REUTERS/Edgard Garrido

el miércoles. Micheletti apuesta a los comicios -convocados antes de que ocurriera el golpe del 28 de junio- para dar una vuelta de página a la crisis. Tresdecadacuatrohondureños cree que las elecciones ayudarán a salir de la crisis, según una encuesta de CID-Gallup, pero la comunidad

internacional y Zelaya amenazan con desconocerlas si antes no hay un acuerdo político. “Yo soy una solución para legitimar las elecciones”, dijo el martes en una entrevista radial Zelaya. Sin embargo, uno de sus negociadores duda de la voluntad de Micheletti para

avanzar. “Nosotros no nos sentaremos a la mesa de negociaciones con el Gobierno de facto a menos que haya una propuesta constructiva, creativa y novedosa que desemboque en la restitución del presidente Zelaya”, dijo Víctor Meza, uno de los representantes de Zelaya, el miércoles a Reuters.

El reloj corre y cada vez queda menos tiempo para cerrar un acuerdo. Faltando un mes para los comicios, lo que pase en estos días podría ser el último intento para superar la crisis.

“Es el agotamiento de este proceso”, dijo la consultora Thelma Mejía, quien cree que para Zelaya va a ser más fácil negociar con quien gane las elecciones.

Un grupo de 16 legisladores estadounidenses envió una carta al presidente de Estados Unidos, Barack Obama, pidiendo que el Gobierno no reconozca las elecciones si persisten las actuales condiciones.

La llegada de los funcionarios estadounidenses generó expectativas de un acuerdo. La delegación, que busca una salida urgente a la peor crisis política en Centroamérica desde la invasión estadounidense de Panamá en 1989, está compuesta por el secretario adjunto para asuntos del Hemisferio Occidental, Thomas Shannon; el adjunto a la secretaria de Estado, Craig Kelly, y Dan Restrepo de la Casa Blanca. □

Rusia dice Ecuador le pidió un préstamo

MOSCU (Reuters) - Ecuador, obligado a buscar alternativas de financiamiento tras declararse en incumplimiento de parte de su deuda soberana el año pasado, solicitó un préstamo a Rusia, dijo el miércoles a la prensa el ministro de Finanzas ruso, Alexei Kudrin.

El presidente ecuatoriano, Rafael Correa, se encuentra de visita en Moscú esta semana y tiene previsto reunirse el jueves con su colega ruso, Dmitry Medvedev, y el primer ministro Vladimir Putin. Entre los temas que abordarán se encuentran energía y defensa. Kudrin declinó especificar el monto del crédito y comentó que las conversaciones sobre el tema entre las dos naciones productoras de petróleo aún no comienzan.

Ecuador ya suscribió un acuerdo de “dinero por petróleo” con China por 1.000 millones de dólares y Correa dijo a Reuters esta semana que esperaba más acuerdos bilaterales en el futuro.

Rusia -el tercer mayor propietario de reservas de oro y de moneda extranjera del mundo con unos 400.000 millones de dólares- ha recibido varias solicitudes de crédito de países afectados por la crisis. □

Lula dice que acabar con violencia en Brasil llevará tiempo

RIO DE JANEIRO (Reuters) - Acabar con la criminalidad es un proceso que toma tiempo, dijo el miércoles el presidente de Brasil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, diez días después del comienzo de una ola de violencia en Río de Janeiro.

“Tenemos que evitar lo que pasó en Río de Janeiro en los últimos días”, dijo Lula durante un acto en la favela Mangueira, cerca del mítico estadio Maracanã y frecuente escenario de enfrentamientos entre policías y narcotraficantes.

“Hay personas que creen que el gobernador podría acabar con las bandas en un minuto. Si fuera fácil, la violencia no duraría 30, 40 años”, agregó.

Lula inauguró mejoras a un gimnasio realizadas con recursos del Gobierno federal. “El

narcotráfico es una realidad (...). Es necesario aprehender a aquellos que quitan la libertad a quienes quieren trabajar honestamente”, dijo Lula.

El presidente afirmó que su Gobierno federal está apoyando el combate contra la violencia y la criminalidad, y que tenía la obligación de cuidar Río de Janeiro, ex capital y meca turística del país.

Hace diez días, narcotraficantes intentaron invadir el Morro dos Macacos, en la zona norte de la ciudad, desatando una ola de violencia que provocó la muerte de al menos 42 personas entre narcotraficantes, policías e inocentes.

Durante el intento de invasión, los narcotraficantes abatieron a tiros a un helicóptero de la policía, ocasionando la muerte de tres agentes. □

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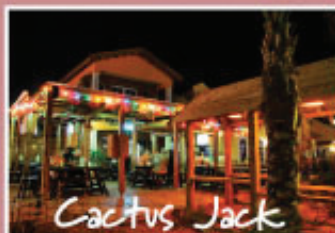


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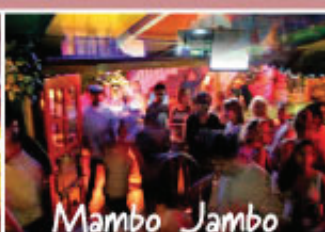
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